



# Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting  
the Children of Waukesha County

March 2013



## Making A Positive Difference

By: Adoption Resources of Wisconsin/The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center

Sometimes, it's just a day gone wrong. Other times, it feels like you're in a parenting rut. When we're out of ideas, patience, and creativity, it feels lonely and overwhelming to parent someone whose behaviors are challenging.

If you find yourself repeating phrases to children in your home that your parents told you growing up, you're not alone. We learned most of our parenting techniques and discipline skills from our parents.

Unfortunately, many of those techniques don't seem to work well with children and youth who have histories of stress, trauma, abuse, and/or neglect. The good news is that our parenting skills can grow and change - and after all, isn't growth what we're expecting from the kids in our care, too?

### Tracking Behaviors

When things feel out of control, we're often looking for the magic answer. One tangible thing that might help you is to learn about specific triggers and feelings of the youth in your care.

Sometimes the best way to do this is to take a notebook and write down simple observations throughout the day. By taking notice, you might gain some objective insights instead of reacting in the moment.

Some other things you might want to pay attention to include:

- When did the children follow through with your requests?
- Are there certain times of the day or places when they *don't* follow through with your requests?
- Are there any unmet care needs (food, sleep) that they may have at specific times of the day?
- What triggers them to have a negative response?
- When do they become overwhelmed?
- How much stress can they handle before acting out or displaying behaviors?

Also check out our tip sheet, The Importance of Documentation at: <http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/library/887/documenting.pdf>

### Know Yourself

Self-awareness begins by knowing and understanding how our values can effect the interactions we have with children in our care. Knowing how you feel in response to specific behaviors can give you more parenting tools.

- What do you value and why?
- How did your family solve problems, make decisions, and incorporate discipline when you were growing up?
- What behaviors do you find the most challenging and how do they make you feel?
- What life experiences have youth in your care experienced that you find difficult to understand?

- What do you look like when you first start to become stressed and overwhelmed?
- What do you look like when you reach your boiling point and how long does it take for you to settle back down? Refer to the *Reaching Your Boiling Point* tip sheet at: <http://www.wiadopt.org/library/948/reachingyourboilingpoint.pdf>

Do any of your answers surprise you? Maybe the kids in your care already know some of the answers to these questions. Your life experiences do have an impact on your parenting skills and it's important to understand how our history and values can impact us as adults.

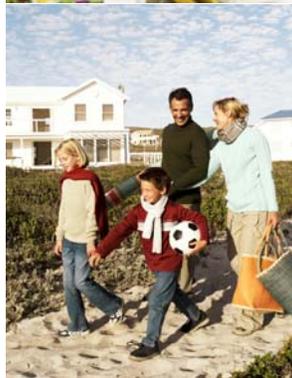


Sometimes it isn't just the kids' behaviors that parents find challenging, but rather how their behaviors can trigger feelings in yourself. If the kids are in therapy, hopefully you have a good rapport with their therapists so you can occasionally talk about how your own stress meshes with your children's.



### Why Stress Matters

Stress is the reaction we have to a threat, both real and imagined, that makes us respond in a certain way. When we become frightened by something and jump, or become sad and have tears involuntarily roll down our cheeks, those are stress reactions.



When children with a background of trauma have a reactions to a particular stressor, they are reacting, not thinking. Because most of us, as parents, were raised without the kind of stress many kids in care have, we forget that the child may be reacting to something that happened in the past. We in turn often revert to *our* past and give them a consequence because that's how we were raised.

However, that doesn't always seem to work to well with children and teens in care who have histories of being easily overwhelmed with stress and trauma. In fact, some foster parents report that the behaviors of a child in care actually seem to get worse when they give consequences to negative behaviors.

That's because adding a consequence can make the child feel even more overwhelmed, which usually results in more severe behaviors. Or sometimes the child shuts down completely.

### What Can You Do?

So what can you do instead of giving a consequence for a negative behavior?

- Try to figure out what the kids are really trying to tell you when they're acting out. Behavior is communication - why are they acting out?
- What can you do to connect with them instead?

Continued on Page 3

## Local Activities

### Waukesha Public Library

#### **Youth Art Month**

Waukesha Schools student art will be featured in the month of March.

#### **iPad Game Days**

We've downloaded some great gaming apps on the iPads, now it's your turn to test them out. First come, first served, play free for up to 30 minutes. Ages 8 - 12. Wednesdays, 3/6 & 3/20, 4 - 6 PM

#### **Pajama-Rama!**

No registration required.

Wednesdays, 7:00 - 7:30 PM, March 6 - March 27

Bedtime story times with Kathy Luck and her loveable puppet friends.

#### **Playgroup**

Ages birth to preschool.

Fridays, 10:30 AM - Noon, March 1 - March 15

Informal gathering for parents and other adults with children birth to preschool age. Simply drop-in and you will find toys to play with and books to read.

#### **Seuss-pondous Celebration!**

Saturday, March 2, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Families can stop by the library throughout the day and revel in all things Seuss. Children will enjoy crafts, games, movies, and of course there will be plenty of Seuss books available to read. The event is free and does not require registration

#### **Teen Manga & Anime Club**

Meets the third Tuesday of every month at 5:00 PM.

#### **Teen Advisory Group**

Meets the last Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM (Jan. - Nov.)

#### **Teen Book Club**

Meets the last Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM (Jan. - Nov.)

### Milwaukee County Zoo

#### **March 2 - Family Free Day at the Zoo**

Sponsored by North Shore Bank and FOX 6.

On these special days, all visitors receive free Zoo admission; the parking fee remains in effect.

#### **March 9 & 10 - Behind the Scenes Weekend at the Zoo**

Don't miss taking part in these annual tours through the Zoo areas not normally open to the public.

#### **March 23 & 24 - Breakfast & Lunch with the Bunny at the Zoo**

Sponsored by Racine Danish Krinkles.

Celebrate Easter with your favorite bunny!

#### **March 30 - Egg Day at the Zoo**

Sponsored by Welch's and Pick 'n Save.

Bunnies and chicks and bears, oh my! Join in Easter fun with a host of hoppin' activities!

#### **Hours**

March 1 through May 24, 2013: Daily 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM

#### **Admission**

January 1 through March 31

Adults: \$11.75

Juniors (ages 3 to 12): \$8.75

Children (2 and under): Free

Seniors (age 60 and over): \$10.25

### Betty Brinn Children's Museum

#### **US Bank & FOX 6 Neighborhood Night - March 21 from 5 - 8 PM**

Free admission, courtesy of US Bank & FOX 6, and the following free programs: 5 - 8 PM Art Central!

Age 3 and older. Join Museum educators and professional artists from Walter's Point Center for the Arts to create unique pieces of visual art to take home and add collaborative work for display in the Museum. Art Central! is supported in part by a grant from the City of Milwaukee Arts Board and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

#### **Milwaukee Children's Choir - March 10 at 2 PM & 2:45 PM**

Ages 3 and older. The Prelude Choir, the youngest voices in the Milwaukee Children's Choir, will sing a variety of playful and traditional children's songs.

#### **Trinity Academy of Irish Dance - March 17 at 1 & 1:30 PM**

See traditional Irish dance and marvel at the intricate steps of talented young performers. These two 20-minute programs demonstrate the Academy's goals of developing self-confidence, teaching culture and life lessons, and promoting Irish dance forms and styles.

#### **March 22 at 11:30 AM**

Experiment with the fun of creating art! Welcome spring by making flowers and bugs in March.

#### **Naomi's Music Together - March 26 at 10 AM & 11 AM**

Ages 5 and younger. Play instruments, chant rhythms and move to music during this 30-minute class with Naomi Bodine, a teacher trained in the Music Together® program. This national program is known for its developmentally appropriate research-based curriculum. Space is limited.

#### **Museum Info**

929 E. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202

414-390-KIDS (5437)

#### **Hours and Fees**

Monday - Saturday 9 AM - 5 PM, and Sunday Noon - 5 PM

Adults & children age 1 and older: \$7.50

Seniors (age 55 and over): \$6.50

Children younger than 1 year Free

### Waukesha County Museum

#### **Museum Vault Tour - March 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 28 & 30**

Join Waukesha County Museum staff as they take you on a behind-the-scenes vault tour of their facility. Discover how the vaults wind through the historic courthouse and learn why they were built, what the vaults originally contained, and how they are used today.

Saturdays: 9:00 AM - 9:45 AM

Thursdays: 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Reservations are required by the Tuesday before tour.

Limit 5 to 10 people per tour.

This 45 minute tour is \$12 per person.

Admission to the museum is included.

For reservations call Eric at 262-521-2859 ext. 223.

### Country Springs

The Springs Water Park - Cool off and Celebrate at Waukesha Area's Most Popular Water Park

Just minutes outside Milwaukee, whether it's January or July, exhilaration awaits beneath the waters of The Springs Water Park. Located at the Country Springs Hotel this aquatic adventure land delights adults and kids of all ages with thrilling tube and body slides, a meandering lazy river, activity pool and the Geyser Games Arcade. Older kids and adults can relax in the indoor/outdoor hot tub and our smallest guests will have a blast in the zero-depth Waukesha Water Works.

Weekday Day Pass (Monday-Thursday): \$15; Weekend Day Pass (Friday-Sunday): \$25

## Making A Positive Difference Continued from Page 1

- Take a time-out for yourself in order to calm down and then come back to the situation.
- Realize that when the children in your care are stressed, they cannot learn. Discipline doesn't work until everyone is calm and can learn.
- Just breathe - either alone or with the child - until both of you are calm again.
- Apologize when you're wrong. While it's often hard to do, how else are kids going to learn to admit they're wrong if they don't see us also doing it?
- Learn to read body language and be more aware of your own body language.
- Meet the kids where they're at, instead of where you're at.
- Be sensitive to possible sensory issues such as lighting, smells, and noises.
- While it's a lot of pressure at times, remember that everything you do is modeling a behavior, so try to focus on modeling positive responses.

And one of the most important things you can do is to change your expectations and start celebrating the successes, no matter how small.

### Elements of Positive Discipline

Discipline means to teach. But if you're stressed, you can't teach until both of you are calm.

Don't forget to bring your sense of humor! Sometimes all it takes is laughing a little more often or learning to see the humor in a situation. It's okay to back down and start smiling or laughing (at yourself) in the middle of an argument. And like apologizing, it's a great way for kids to learn this technique once they see you using it.

Listening to your kids in your care is key, and shows them that you respect them. Here are some other things you can do that might show kids that you respect them.

- Give choices as much as possible. This helps give youth a sense of control over something and gives them the opportunity to learn how to make decisions. Also allow them to make mistakes with some choices - i.e. how to spend their allowance, what to wear according to the weather, etc. Natural consequences take the pressure away from you having to lecture.
- Catch the children in your care following rules and praise them for the specific behavior. While it seems obvious, this often still challenges the best of us when we're stressed. When you give attention for positive behaviors, the negative behaviors go down.
- Create a behavior chart focused on an easily accomplishable task. This will give kids success to build upon, increase self-esteem, and they will learn how to complete a task. For some good examples, go to: <http://childparenting.about.com/cs/behaviorproblems/a/behaviormod/htm>
- Use redirection - focusing on something else. Try going for a walk, a drive, changing the subject, cooking, telling a funny joke that has nothing to do with what you're doing, etc.
- Use "When/Then. Start small. *When you finish dinner, then you can watch TV.*
- Connect before you correct - teachable moments are based on the relationship. Pay attention to both your stress and the youth's stress level before coming back to connect.
- Validate the youth's feelings and worries.

- All of us need to feel like we belong and are important. Frequently remind the youth in your care how important they are and how positively they impact your family.
- Keep a shared journal. When it seems like everything you say seems to turn to an argument, try keeping a journal (with no lectures or reprimands) that you share.
- Transitions and change are just plain difficult regardless of age. Prepare kids in advance of transition using time, pictures, cues and/or verbal descriptions.

Regardless of what happened during the day today, tomorrow is a fresh start for both you and the youth in your care. When you're experiencing difficult times, remind yourself that you are making a positive difference - even if the progress seems painfully slow.

### Resources Available from the FCARC Library

Beyond the Consequences, Logic, and Control (book) by Heather T. Forbes, LCSW & B. Bryan Post, PhD, LCSW

<http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=5566>

Positive Parenting I, II, III (DVDs) by Dr. R. Delaney

<http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=4861>

Positive Discipline: Without Shaking, Shouting, or Spanking (DVD)

<http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=4871>

Behavior Management using Supportive Control (Book) by Vera Fahlberg

<http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/plugins/library/viewmaterial.asp?aid=4884>

### Other Resources

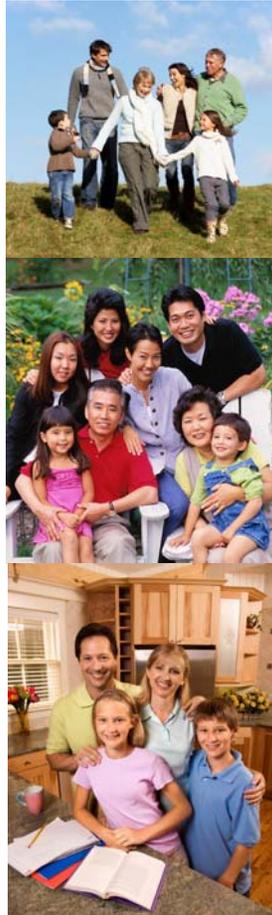
**101 Positive Principles of Discipline**

by Katharine C. Kersey, Ed.D.

**Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Family Care Providers**  
by Cornell University

**Off Road Parenting: Practical Solutions for Difficult Behavior**  
by Caesar Pacifici, Ph.D., Patricia Chamberlain, Ph.D., and Lee White

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# Training and Events



## Contact Numbers:

Waukesha H & HS  
262-548-7212

Children's Mental Health Outreach  
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911  
Family Emergency: 211

### Foster Parent Mentor

Jen Barcus ..... 262-542-2926  
David Mersfelder..... 262-542-2926  
Nikki Mertens ..... 262-246-6180

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor  
262-548-7271

Mary Alice Grosser, Supervisor  
262-548-7272

Kathy Mullooly, Supervisor  
262-896-6832

Shari Rather, Foster Care Coord.  
262-548-7267

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing  
262-548-7277

### Social Workers:

Jennifer Adler..... 262-548-7265

Bob Alioto ..... 262-548-7262

Suzanne Arnold..... 262-548-7348

Megan Fishler ..... 262-896-8570

Laura Jahnke..... 262-548-7359

Becca Kuester..... 262-896-6857

Maria Maurer ..... 262-548-7345

Susan Peck..... 262-896-8574

Madeline Prange ..... 262-548-7394

Janis Ramos..... 262-896-8069

Michael Reed..... 262-548-7347

Cindie Remshek..... 262-548-7639

Greg Rewolinski ..... 262-548-7270

Elizabeth Russo ..... 262-548-7349

Kim Sampson..... 262-548-7273

Mark Sasso ..... 262-548-7346

Linda Senger ..... 262-548-7698

### Kinship Workers:

Linda Finn..... 262-548-7254

Deb Fosberg..... 262-548-7256

If an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect has been made against you, please call:

FASPP  
Norma Schoenberg  
920-922-9627



## Training Offered By Waukesha County

### Parent Café

March 14, 2013

5:30 PM

#### Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road

Waukesha

To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-548-8080.



### Host Training for Parent Café

March 18, 2013

5:45 to 8:45 PM

#### Center for Learning Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road

Waukesha

Call Shari Rather at 262-548-7267 to register.

Childcare and dinner is provided.

### Waukesha County Foster Parent Required Pre-Placement Training

Prospective Foster Parents need to do Part 1 of the training on the following website: <http://www.wcwts.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training> (Please bring your training certificates to the class)

We will then meet to discuss the learning points and answer your questions.

March 11, 2013

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

#### Waukesha County Human Services

500 Riverview Ave.

Brookfield Room G137 - Enter Door 6.

Call Shari Rather to register at 262-548-7267.

### Relative Caregivers Support/ Education Group

Third Tuesday of each month.

March 19, 2013

6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

#### Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI

262-549-5575

Free childcare available. Please call Parents Place to reserve your spot.

Waukesha County Relative Resource Families

Please RSVP to Janis (262-896-8069) or Libby

(262-548-7277)

### Foundation Training

#### Required for Level 2 Foster Home

3/5/13 Cultural Issues in Placement  
3/12/13 Maintaining Family Connectiveness  
3/19/13 Child Abuse & Neglect - A  
3/26/13 Child Abuse & Neglect - B  
4/2/13 Impact of Trauma on Child Development  
4/9/13 Attachment  
4/16/13 Placement and Separation  
4/23/13 Positive Guidance and Discipline  
4/30/13 Effects of Fostering on the Family

All classes are in the Brookfield Room at Waukesha County Human Services. Enter Door 6.

All classes are from 5:30 to 8:30 PM.

Register at <http://wcwpds.wisc.edu/pds-online/>

### Trauma Informed Parenting

#### For Waukesha County Resource Families

Sponsored by the Southern Partnership Presented by Kathy Mullooly and Bob Alioto

4/13/13 Intro. To Trauma Informed Parenting  
4/13/13 Trauma 101  
4/27/13 Understanding Trauma's Effects  
4/27/13 Building a Safe Place  
5/11/13 Dealing with Feelings & Behaviors  
5/11/13 Connections & Healing  
6/1/13 Becoming an Advocate  
6/1/13 Taking Care of Yourself

All classes are in the Brookfield Room at Waukesha County Human Services. Enter Door 6.

All classes are from 9:00AM to 3:30 PM.

Lunch will be provided.

Call Shari Rather to register 262-548-7267.

## Training

Parents Place Programs  
262-549-5575 [www.ppacinc.org](http://www.ppacinc.org)

- **Parenting: The Early Years/Born Learning**  
Wednesday, March 6 - 20 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Teens Managing Anger**  
Monday, March 4 & 11 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Kids Managing Anger**  
Tuesday, March 5 - 26 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Effective Discipline for the Challenging Child**  
Monday, March 4 - 25 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- **Love and Logic**  
Monday, April 1 - 29 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM

### January 2013 Placements

Regular Foster Care: 31 Children	Treatment Foster Care: 10 Children	Group Homes: 1 Children	Residential Care Facilities: 8 Children
Relative Placements: 28 Children	Level 2 Foster Homes: 111 Homes	Level 1 Foster Homes: 40 Homes	Total Homes Assisting Other Counties 15 Homes